

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 705
By Johnson R

A RESOLUTION to honor Ralph J. Shope for his
service in World War II and the Korean War
as part of the 2003 Loudon County
Memorial Day Program.

WHEREAS, since the birth of our great nation, hundreds of thousands of brave American men and women have served their country in the armed forces, and many continue this legacy of service today, defending the most inviolate principles of human freedom and democracy; and

WHEREAS, it is most appropriate that we should honor those courageous men and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice of their lives to preserve the blessed freedoms we enjoy today; over one million Americans throughout our country's history have died in the service of this nation; and

WHEREAS, from the battles of the Rhineland in Europe, to the many battles of the Korean Peninsula, to the firefights and skirmishes of Southeast Asia, and to the air strikes and

bombing missions of the Persian Gulf, our armed forces have unselfishly paid the price of freedom for their friends, families, and for all of us as Tennesseans and Americans; and

WHEREAS, it is the privilege of this General Assembly to pause in its deliberations to honor the brave sons of Loudon County who forfeited their liberty and, in many instances, their lives and to further recognize those who endured personal hardships and imprisonment at the hands of our enemies so that we might continue to enjoy the many bounties of democracy and the American way of life; and

WHEREAS, in this same spirit, Loudon County will be holding a 2003 Veterans' Memorial Ceremony at which time Thomas Howard Bettis, a World War II veteran; Ralph J. Shope, a World War II and Korean War veteran; Charles A. Bettis, a Vietnam War veteran; and Joe D. Mourfield, a Desert Shield and Desert Storm veteran will be specially recognized and honored as representatives of the veterans of each of these four wars; and

WHEREAS, this fitting observance provides the citizens of Loudon County with the opportunity to pay tribute to the veterans from their community who have well served this country; it is incumbent upon the members of this legislative body to recognize this important county observance and these four individuals; and

WHEREAS, Ralph J. Shope served eight months in World War II as a Seaman in the U.S. Navy stationed at Pearl Harbor and served over two and one-half years in the Korean War as a Corporal in the U.S. Army through many battles up and down the Korean Peninsula; and

WHEREAS, Ralph J. Shope, a U.S. Army Corporal, spent over two and one-half years of his military service in Korea as a member of the "Indianhead" 2nd Division as an anti-aircraft gunner in the 8th Battery, where he was engaged in numerous battles and skirmishes, including one where elements of the 2nd Division were ambushed by the enemy and surrounded in a small valley where the division suffered tremendous casualties and had to dig into their foxholes and called in artillery strikes upon their position to attempt to stop the enemy from overrunning their position before being relieved in the fog and rain by a U.S. Marine Division; and

WHEREAS, Ralph J. Shope and five comrades went on a night reconnaissance mission to locate an enemy entrenchment and had to hide out for two nights within earshot of the enemy position, while exhibiting great bravery and disregard for their personal safety, and only Corporal Shope and the squad leader safely returned to their unit's position; and

WHEREAS, Ralph J. Shope and other comrades utilized a half track during the heat of battle to remove wounded soldiers from the field of battle within enemy fire and were recommended for the Bronze Star, and Corporal Shope received the Korean Service Medal with Bronze Service Star and the United Nations Service Medal; and

WHEREAS, Ralph J. Shope has served the Loudon County community as a member of community and veterans organizations, including the "Hardee's Crowd," and he worked for twenty-five years for the Tennessee Valley Authority at Melton Hill Dam, Bull Run Steam Plant, and Kingston Steam Plant before retiring in 1986 to care for his mother, Julia Shope, and to operate full time one of the most well-kept and beautiful beef cattle farms in Loudon County; and

WHEREAS, Ralph J. Shope, the son of Fred and Julia Shope, enjoys the friendship of his special friend, Mary Lou Dorsey, and the love of his brothers, Jack and wife, Carolyn Shope, Beecher and his wife, Lillian Shope, Mitchell and his wife, Glenda Shope, and the memory of his brother, Hugh Shope, as well as many other family members, friends, and neighbors; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby recognize Ralph J. Shope for his accomplishments as a veteran, a family man, and a community leader.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we encourage all Loudon County citizens to join with us in this worthy Memorial Day observance, to acknowledge the sacrifices and heroism of Ralph J. Shope and the other veterans of World War II and the Korean War, advocating that local

ceremonies and services be held across the country in memory of all deceased Veterans and in appreciation and admiration for their local veterans of the United States Armed Forces.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.